



Guidelines for Employers & Supervisors of Overseas Trained Dietitians

Introduction

In 2024, the Dietitians Board started a review of its registration processes and requirements. Part of the review included evidence that the Board did not need to undertake all of the following processes for all applicants:

- Recognition of Qualification (a review of the individual applicant's dietetic qualification)
- Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ) Examination
- Oral Examination (OSCE)

A combination of previous exam results and the Board's experience registering overseas trained dietitians indicated that the Board could safely reduce the amount of pre-registration assessment required of some overseas applicants.

As a result of this work, new pathways to registration were developed in addition to the existing assessment and examination pathway and it was decided that all overseas trained dietitians would initially be registered in a different scope of practice (provisional).

The Board is required under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA) to protect the health and safety of the public. To ensure that each individual dietitian is safe and competent to practise, the Board will require an enhanced, and formalised, orientation and supervision period for all overseas trained dietitians registered by the Board. Employers and supervisors will play a key role in ensuring this process is robust.

The following guidance provides:

- some general information that prospective employers may find useful when employing overseas trained dietitians
- instructions that employers and supervisors will need when planning to employ an overseas trained dietitian.

General information for employers

Overseas trained dietitians will now engage in a two-step process prior to having their registration confirmed and their first Annual Practising Certificate (APC) issued. If you are interested in employing an overseas trained practitioner, it is recommended that you check:

- which pathway to registration the applicant will be applying under (because the timelines for each pathway vary)
- whether or not the applicant has completed the *Eligibility for Registration Application*

Step 1 – Eligibility for Registration Application

At the start of the process (prior to seeking employment), an overseas trained dietitian is expected to apply for eligibility. The *Eligibility for Registration Application* will assess whether or not the applicant:

- has a dietetic qualification that meets the Board’s requirements
- is fit to practise (criminal record check, health query, reference review, Certificate of Good Standing)
- meets the Board’s English language requirements
- meets the Board’s active clinical practice requirements

Once this application has been processed, the applicant will receive a letter of eligibility from the Board. Employers should ask to see a copy of the letter when considering job applicants who are overseas trained and not yet registered. To help provide assurance to prospective employers, the letter will also outline the pathway(s) to registration for which the applicant is eligible.

If the job applicant does not have a letter, and you are interested in employing them, you can ask them to apply. The processing time for *Eligibility for Registration Applications* is up to 20 working days from receipt of a complete application.

Although the eligibility for registration application only takes 20 working days, please be mindful of the registration pathway(s) for which a candidate is eligible to apply. The timelines vary – those who must complete the examinations (and haven’t yet done it) will take longer, for example, than those who are not required to sit the examinations or those who have already completed them.

Step 2 – Application for registration

After completing Step 1, applicants will either:

- be eligible to seek employment immediately
- need to complete the examination process
- need to apply to have their qualifications assessed further and then complete the examination process.

Regardless of registration pathway, all applicants who are ready to submit the *Application for Registration in the Scope of Practice Dietitian, Provisional* will need an employer to support the application process. The application will be incomplete without supporting documentation from the employer/supervisor.

By the time the applicant is ready to apply for registration, the Board will already have confirmed that the applicant has met most of the requirements to be registered. The main component of the *Application for Registration in the Scope of Practice Dietitian, Provisional* is documentation that confirms the applicant has an employment situation where the Board’s requirements for orientation, induction and supervision will be met.

Employers are encouraged to review the Board’s *Supervision, Orientation and Induction for Overseas Trained Dietitians Policy (those registered in the scope of practice Dietitian: Provisional)*. When preparing the documentation, employers are also encouraged to use the checklist below.

Core requirements of an orientation, induction and supervision plan: A Guidance Checklist for employers and supervisors

As part of the process for confirming registration in the *Scope of Practice: Dietitian, Provisional*, the employer must submit a plan for orientation, induction and supervision. To minimise delays, it is recommended that employers prepare a template plan and finalise it with the applicant and supervisor during the recruitment process.

To be approved, the plan must include the following minimum requirements (the requirements are further explained by the Board’s *Supervision, Orientation and Induction for Overseas Trained Dietitians Policy (those registered in the scope of practice Dietitian, Provisional)*).

It is recommended that you use the following checklist to ensure the application is complete.

✓	Requirement
☐	The name of the nominated supervisor
☐	Confirmation that the supervisor and supervisee are aware of the supervision plan and will have the resources (i.e. protected time) to meet the requirements
Confirmation that the nominated supervisor meets the following requirements for supervisors	
☐	Be registered in the <i>Scope of Practice: Dietitian</i> with the Dietitians Board.
☐	Be in good standing with the Board.
☐	Hold a current Annual Practising Certificate
☐	Be employed by the same employer as the supervisee and be available to provide onsite (face to face) supervision.
☐	Have a minimum of 2 years’ experience working as a registered dietitian (the full two years does not need to be in New Zealand).
☐	If supervising a prescriber, must also hold a prescribing endorsement.
☐	Note: from 2 February 2028 supervisors will be required to have supervision training
At a minimum, the orientation and induction includes the following:	
☐	A minimum 1-week orientation without any clinical responsibility
☐	Shadowing a minimum of 2 colleagues in the first week (one does not need to be a dietitian)
☐	Induction to work IT systems, PHARMAC, Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act, Privacy Act 2020 (primarily the Health Information Privacy Code 2020)



Dietitians Board

Te Mana Mātanga Mātai Kai

☐	An introduction to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Cultural Safety (Note – the Board requires all dietitians new to New Zealand to complete a Mauri Ora course in their first year but an introduction at the start of employment will be of benefit to the dietitian and their patients. Some overseas trained dietitians might be unfamiliar with the concept of cultural safety).
☐	An induction to the Health and Disability Commissioner and the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights (Note: the Board requires all dietitians new to New Zealand to complete the HDC online modules in their first year but an introduction at the start of employment to understand the health/legal environment will likely benefit the new dietitian.)
☐	Details of any standard onsite induction, orientation and cultural safety-related offerings the employer provides.
☐	If applicable, information about any arrangement(s) deemed necessary for the individual practitioner (i.e. responses to needs identified during the recruitment process, etc.)
At a minimum, the supervision section of the plan includes the following:	
☐	At least one initial meeting to ensure the newly registered dietitian knows where to get information (and who they might need to ask), is settling in and if they have identified any assistance that would help them settle and feel comfortable starting work
☐	For clinical roles, the supervisor will sit in during consultations for the first 3 patients (the supervisor must use the Board's Clinical Observation Form)
☐	The supervisor must use, and submit to the Board, the Board's Clinical Observation Form for assessing the consultations for the first 3 patients.
☐	Fortnightly supervision meetings for first 3 months, each session will include review of patient notes
☐	Confirmation that, after the first 3 months, supervision meetings will be as often as the supervisor deems necessary but, at minimum, monthly
☐	Confirmation that the Board's Supervision Report template will be used and the Reports will be submitted quarterly.
☐	Confirmation that the supervisor and employer are aware supervision must continue for a minimum of 12 months.